

Now, there are those who say, "Colombia, yeah, they are our partner, and, of course, they are the oldest democracy in Latin America. But there has been violence in that country." Historically they are right. President Uribe, when he was elected, pledged to defeat the FARC, the left-wing narco-trafficking terrorist group which has troubled the nation of Colombia over the last 40 years. And he has made tremendous progress.

In fact, President Uribe today enjoys 80 percent approval. Eight out of 10 Colombians approve of the leadership of President Uribe. And if you look at this Congress, this House of Representatives, this Congress has an 18 percent approval rating. So clearly, the Colombians think more of their president than the American people do this Congress. And at the same time that he has made progress defeating the left-wing narco-trafficking FARC, 73 percent of the Colombian people believe he has made Colombia more secure and safer while respecting human rights. In fact, today the murder rate in Colombia is lower than in Washington, D.C. It is lower than in Baltimore. In fact, it is safer in Colombia than it is in our Nation's Capital.

The U.S.-Colombia trade promotion agreement is a good agreement for American workers, American farmers and American manufacturers. Let's bring it to a vote.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCHENRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA VOTING RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia? There was no objection.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, this is a special day for all Americans, none more so than the people I represent,

the residents of the District of Columbia. And so I have come this evening to offer some remarks, remarks that I think are particularly justified today when the residents of the District of Columbia, like all other American citizens, are paying their Federal income taxes. The difference is they are doing so without any voting representation on the floor of the House or the Senate.

First, I begin with some gratitude to my colleagues, the so-called Blue Dogs, for whom this hour had been claimed, but who gave it to me this evening because of the subject matter of this special order. I very much appreciate their support. For those of you who don't know who the Blue Dogs are, they are the more conservative Members of the House. They supported the D.C. Voting Rights bill that indeed passed the House, one of the first.

We hadn't been here 6 months, I don't think we had been here more than 4 months before this bill to give the District of Columbia citizens, the citizens of the Nation's Capital, voting rights only in this chamber, the people's House. It was indeed passed by the House of Representatives, mind you, the only House that is affected. In a Nation known more for its incrementalism than for rapid change to effect justice, we have accepted the notion that we must begin with the House, the people's House. After more than 200 years of meeting every obligation that has been met by every other citizen, we think it is not too much to ask that the residents of the Nation's Capital have the vote at least in the people's House. We are asking for no more than that.

Our thanks go especially to the Speaker of the House, NANCY PELOSI, who made it a priority to pass this bill and put her full energy behind it. She was willing to bring it to the floor. She made it clear that she, as the leader, the first woman to lead the House of Representatives, wanted to put her signature on this bill and asked four Members on both sides of the aisle to support it. Majority Leader STENY HOYER, a longtime supporter of this bill, as well, put all of his energy in it. Particularly when it was stopped first by a parliamentary maneuver, he worked tirelessly until he got this bill passed. He has been with us every step of the way. These two leaders have stood for full representation and equality for Americans in so many ways. No one should be surprised at the leadership they have given us on this bill.

I have to very especially mention Congressman TOM DAVIS who doggedly started us on what has been a truly bipartisan path. When I was in the minority and he indeed became the chief sponsor of the House-only bill, I discovered indeed a partner for us. The State of Utah barely missed getting a House vote in the last census. And they missed it for reasons I have to put into the RECORD. Utah sends many of its citizens who willingly agree to go away and become missionaries when they are

young for a few years of their lives. They, of course, are missionaries for their Mormon church. And they are coming home to their families. Like others who come home, the State of Utah wanted them counted since they remained residents. They took the matter all the way to the Supreme Court. And because of the way the Census Bureau and the administrative process had ruled, the Court allowed the census to stand. And all of these missionaries exercising their freedom of religion, their freedom of speech, while being residents of their State, lost their State a seat.

To say the least, residents of Utah were not joyful about this. And they have joined us in what would seem to be the example par excellence of win-win in our country. A heavily Republican district and State, some would say the most Republican State in the union, a big city in the United States tends to be Democratic, this one is, joined together. It's a wash politically. Nobody gains and nobody loses. Why hasn't this bill passed?

Well, it has almost passed. And we will get into that in a minute. Just a few more indications of gratitude. HENRY WAXMAN, chairman of the committee that has direct jurisdiction, along with another chairman, JOHN CONYERS, were extraordinary leaders in this process. I mentioned Utah. I thank Governor Jon Huntsman for coming here to testify about the importance of the bill and the entire Utah delegation, Representatives BISHOP, CANNON, and MATHESON.

I particularly thank the 219 Democrats and 22 Republicans who won a vote of 241-177 and passed this bill last year. And may I thank the 8 Republicans and 49 Democrats who have brought us so close that it is hard to believe that we are not already there.

Only in the other body is 57 percent not a majority. The Senate has required 60 votes. We are three votes short. We are so close. I have every reason to believe that we will, in fact, this year pass the D.C. Voting Rights Act, creating a historic 110th Congress that every Member, I think, will be proud of.

I have to thank the local and national civil rights organizations that have been a formidable force spreading around the country the message. There are too many of them to name on the local level. The great leader has been DCVote Ilir Zerka and his army of residents in the region and in the city carrying a message for us, the leadership conference on civil rights, the Nation's great leader on civil rights matters has been a major figure in this bill. We could not possibly have gotten this far without them, along with every major civil rights organization in the country.

I particularly thank my own mayor, Adrian Fenty, and city council chair, Vincent Gray, who joined every mayor and city council of the District of Columbia in supporting our residents and

this bill. And I especially thank the residents of the District of Columbia, living and dead, who have fought for equal citizenship over the ages.

I have not yet mentioned my Senate partners, but they have been equally important to this bill. You don't pass a bill just in the House. Senator JOE LIEBERMAN was the lead Democratic sponsor. Consistent with the way he has helped me on voting rights in every iteration, and there have been several different kinds of bills, he became the lead sponsor here.

A very special word of thanks goes to Senator ORRIN HATCH of Utah. Some of you may think that ORRIN HATCH comes to this because, after all, he represents Utah. And he does. But had you had the pleasure of hearing Senator HATCH in the committee hearings, you would understand that he is moved by a deep principle about voting rights. His principal reason for voting rights dominated much of what he had to say about people who pay taxes and go to war without representation. I thank Senator ORRIN HATCH who was a good friend of mine before this bill. He has endeared himself to me in ways I will never be able to pay by the way in which he has stood fast with us, yes, because his State is involved. Of course, that is his primary obligation. But making it clear in the way he discusses the bill that there is a deeply rooted principle in his support.

The many supporters of this bill will forgive me for not making this a calling of the roll. But I come to the floor because on tax day in the District of Columbia, people have gone all over the city to assure residents of the very substantial progress we are making. DCVote and its coalition have been all across the United States targeting seven States and have done a remarkable job. I have a little bit to say about that.

What I want to do this evening during this special order hour is to essentially discuss this issue from three perspectives. Whose rights are we talking about? What barriers are there? And whose responsibility is it to remedy this matter?

□ 1945

I start with whose rights they are, because the greatest frustration I have had as a Member of the House is that most Americans do not know that 600,000 people live in the Nation's Capital and don't have the same rights as they have. A lot of them have been in the armed services with people in Washington, DC. They come here, 20 million of them, every year. There is no indication, until they begin to see license plates that say "no taxation without representation" on those official license plates, which was put there precisely to relieve our frustration that most people simply do not know.

I have a word to say about that, because increasingly people do know and support us. According to the Washington Post poll, 61 percent say they

support the bill I have come to the floor to speak to tonight. That is close to an American consensus today.

Why would people be for the vote? They are Americans, that is why. Do you really think that in this country today, at war, a country where love of country is manifest in everything we do, they will do anything but say that people who have fought, yes, and died in every war since the country was created, including the war that created the country itself, the American Revolutionary War, that people who pay taxes the same way they do, are just like them, should not have representation? It is a thoroughly American idea. So don't be surprised that 61 percent today support this bill, in the House only, because that is all that is before the other body, the Senate, as we speak.

Who are these people? We thought we would let you see exactly who we are talking about. This man's name is Larry Chapman, a resident of the District of Columbia. I am proud to represent him. I don't know him. I checked him out. He lives here. I represent him. By the way, note his uniform. He is a firefighter. He is a man who risks his life for whoever is here, a Member of Congress, a visitor, a resident, a regional resident.

I don't represent this man, Jayme Heflin. He lives in Maryland. He does the same thing for Maryland that Mr. Chapman does for the District of Columbia.

I don't think you will find an American citizen, if you went out with a microphone, who thinks that Larry Chapman, who lives in the District of Columbia, should not have representation in the Congress, someone who can vote on war or peace or raising or lowering taxes, and that Jayme Heflin should.

That is who I represent. The difference between these two men cannot be seen in their faces, cannot be seen in their jobs. The only difference is where they live. They live within a few miles of one another, because Maryland is part of our region, a region without borders, as a matter of fact. If you go to Maryland, you won't even know you are there.

Both of them pay Federal taxes. Both of them don't like it, and both of them do it. There should be no difference between Larry Chapman and Jayme Heflin. There is no difference. The only difference is a difference that only this body can correct.

Why do I say only this body? Because the Congress has exclusive jurisdiction over the Nation's Capital. The Framers were intent upon one thing and one thing only when they set up the Nation's Capital. It certainly wasn't to deprive us of the vote. It was to make sure we weren't in a State, because you couldn't tell when the State's jurisdiction would conflict with the Federal jurisdiction. That is the only principle that was at stake. And, indeed, all the evidence is that the last thing they

would have done would have been to give a vote to Mr. Heflin and not to Mr. Chapman.

The reason we know it is that four signers of the Constitution which gave the Congress this jurisdiction were from Maryland and Virginia, which contributed the land for the city where we are today, two from Maryland and two from Virginia. They contributed land on which a sizable number of their own constituents were living.

They made sure that in the 10-year transition period during which the land was being shifted, that their residents would still have the vote. But once, of course, it left the jurisdiction of Maryland and Virginia, it was up to the Congress. And the first Congress, in so many words, promised that when the land came after 10 years under the complete jurisdiction, that these residents would indeed continue to have the vote.

We know it for sure, because not only were these residents of Maryland and Virginia living in the territory, but among them were men who had fought in the Revolutionary War. The one slogan that every school child knows from that war is we are fighting against no taxation without representation. It is inconceivable and it is impossible and it simply did not happen that the Framers of the Constitution from Maryland and Virginia gave the land and said, take away the vote from the people we represent once you have jurisdiction.

Maryland couldn't give us the vote once we became the Nation's Capital. Virginia couldn't do it. Only the Congress can do it. The Constitution itself makes clear that the grant of exclusive jurisdiction to the Congress means that the Congress is empowered to offer this correction that has been needed for much too long.

This is another resident of the District of Columbia whose work all of us would admire, because she is a teacher. Her name is Chandra Jackson-Sounders, teaching and counseling in the D.C. public schools for 17 years. A native Washingtonian, like me. She pays Federal income tax, like all the rest of us who live here. We are not immune from that. There she is, teaching children.

Who would deny this young woman, who has committed herself to one of the hardest jobs in the country, who pays hefty federal income taxes, the same rights that they have? No American. No one imbued with the spirit of our Constitution or of the native ethic, the ethic that gave birth to the country, no taxation without representation.

The more people know about D.C. voting rights, the more support we have. I ought to thank Stephen Colbert right here on the House floor, because at least four times he has invited me on the Colbert Report to make fun of the District of Columbia for not having voting rights, until under cross-examination one day on his program I found

out that he was born in the District of Columbia himself. He has managed to get himself in the portrait gallery, to be sure, either in the men's room or in a corner close to it.

But I must here pay tribute to Stephen, whom I call Colbert, because, more than all we have been able to do, he has gotten the message out that 600,000 people live in the Nation's Capital, pay taxes, and do not have the same representation as they do. He makes fun of me. That is why I go on and allow it. "You must not be in the United States." He said, "Who could you possibly represent?" "Why don't you move into the country?" That is what I have to take.

But taking what Colbert has thrown at me has gotten people to understand, yes, through his jostling and joking, what is a very serious matter; that in a country that is trying to bring democracy all over the world, including particularly Iraq, where we have given so many American lives, over 4,000, there are people right here who don't have the same rights that people from the District of Columbia are, as I speak, fighting to get for the residents of Iraq, Afghanistan and so many other countries.

Support for D.C. voting rights keeps going up. I noted earlier that 61 percent say that they are specifically for that bill, because that is the question we asked. You ask them the question, this is the kind of response you get. "Do you support equal voting rights for the people of the District of Columbia?" In 1999, you got 72 percent of Americans saying yes. In January 2005, you got 82 percent.

Thank you, Colbert, D.C. Vote, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, and all of those who have helped us get the message out. Eighty-two percent of the American people. Not a surprising figure, not in the United States of America.

What you may believe is that, well, they have got a lot of liberals up here, and what do you expect? A very scientific poll was done behind these figures. With 72 percent and 82 percent, you know there must be some bipartisanship here.

But are they all piled up in one part of the country? Are they all really young people or older people? Who are these people who support D.C. voting rights? "Norton says who the people are who want voting rights. Well, who are these people who registered these large numbers, 61 percent for this bill, up to 82 percent if you ask the bald question about equal voting rights in Congress for the people who live in the Nation's Capital?"

This is perhaps the most important data, and it is fascinating for the Senate in particular to bear in mind, because it breaks down who we are talking about in the American public.

Notice how far out the blue bar goes. That is because there is no support less than 77 percent among all adults, and 82 percent is that figure I just showed

you. Women, 86 percent; men, 78 percent.

Let's look at the age groups. Is this all a young persons' thing, or what? Young people, well, they were raised to believe that democracy is for everybody. They are off the charts, 87 percent. But look at 35-54. They are at 78 percent. And look at 55 years old and above, many of whom were raised at a time when many Americans did not have equal rights and perhaps imbued that culture. 55-years-old and above, 82 percent of the American people support equal voting rights for the people who live in the Nation's Capital.

Sometimes we find that some parts of the country favor certain kinds of action more than others. You are quite aware that some parts of the country are more military, some parts of the country are considered more liberal, so it was important to know who are we talking about. And this I found perhaps the most fascinating part of the revelation.

□ 2000

Northeast, 84 percent of the people; midwest, 80 percent of the people, these are for equal voting rights; south, ladies and gentlemen, put aside your stereotypes, 84 percent of southerners support equal voting rights in Congress for the people of the District of Columbia; west, 80 percent.

So the south and the northeast give us the largest majority or super majorities, 84 percent each with midwest and west right behind them at 80 percent. In this metropolitan area, where they know us best, have seen us at our best and our worst, the metropolitan area includes Virginia, Maryland, and the figure is 82 percent.

In the nonmetropolitan area, beyond the counties immediately surrounding the District where people tend to be more conservative, hardly any difference, 83 percent there support it; 82 percent in the immediate area.

I am still looking, friends, for some break in the public of the kind we regularly see on things like guns or the military or the war. It will not be found in this graph, not on this Tax Day, not tomorrow, not in the America of the 21st century, maybe in the America of the 19th century, early 20th century.

But now for decades, I believe it would be difficult to find Americans who would stand up and salute the proposition that people who are paying Federal income taxes, that people who are fighting and dying in war are being denied a say-so on those issues in this House.

You break it down even further to see who you are talking about, how about those who have a family member in the military, 82 percent support D.C. voting rights. How about a favorite that is often cited as difference among Americans, regularly attend services, we note at a moment when the Pope has just arrived in town, but we see that that's 82 percent of those who regularly attend religious services.

We, of course, have family or friends living in D.C., I wouldn't even cite those. You would expect those people to perhaps be more aware and more inclined to be with us.

Registered voters, 81 percent of registered voters support equal voting rights for the residents of the city, and here is one that cannot be put aside, because this is the great divider, Republicans and Democrats, 77 percent of Republicans, 82 percent of independents, 87 percent of Democrats, no statistical difference even by party on so basic a matter as whether or not the people I represent, and I should be required to do whatever this chamber says, along with the others, and not have any say, utterly and thoroughly un-American even to state such a proposition.

Well, the Republicans who supported us in the House on this bill, led by TOM DAVIS, including a number of others who voted for us, didn't have this figure before them. They had a gut instinct of what it means to be an American.

There are any number of them who could be quoted. Among the most eloquent was Representative MIKE PENCE, who actually wrote out what was in his head and published it and posted it, "Why I Voted for D.C. Representation in the House," and the senior Senator LUGAR, one of the eight Republicans who voted for this bill. But it was MIKE who started it here, because the bill started here.

Let me quote from Representative MIKE PENCE, a leader of most conservative matters here, understood to be a leader in the House and particularly a much-respected conservative leader. He is a wonderfully affable man, but he would be the first to note that he and I have considerable differences on issues that come before this House.

But at the time this bill was pending, Representative PENCE wrote, "The fact that more than half a million of Americans living in the District of Columbia are denied a single voting representative in Congress is clearly a historic wrong and justice demands that it be addressed."

He goes on to say, "The old book tells us what is required," and he quotes the Bible, "do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with Your God."

Then he says, "I believe that justice demands we right this historic wrong. The American people should have representation in the people's House. I believe that kindness demands that, like Republicans from Abraham Lincoln to Jack Kemp, we do the right thing for all Americans regardless of race or political creed. And I believe humility demands that we do so in a manner consistent with our Constitution, laws and traditions. The D.C. voting bill gets this test, and I am honored to have the opportunity to continue to play some small role in leading our constitutional republic ever closer to a more perfect

union.” Those are the words of Representative MIKE PENCE. I believe they are words that history will remember.

The support continues to grow, the support reflected here, just to name a few of the States that have been visited, not by me but by residents in the city of the region. I want to thank the citizens of Oregon; of New Hampshire, where a whole resolution has been introduced to support the bill; of Montana, where the editorial boards of the major newspapers, in Montana, the Butte Chamber of Commerce, have accorded the residents of the District of Columbia every courtesy in meeting with them and the papers have editorialized for voting rights. I named those States because DC Vote—Leadership Conference on Civil Rights have targeted those States among others.

I particularly note a resolution in New Hampshire, pending in both the New Hampshire House and Senate that is quite extraordinary. It expresses regret that New Hampshire's two U.S. Senators voted against the D.C. voting rights bill and calling upon them to correct that in the next vote.

As one of the sponsors, Representative Cindy Rosenwald said, and I am quoting her, “We are, here in our small corner of the country, democracy's most passionate supporters. Therefore, I believe we should expect the same level of commitment and passion for representative democracy from those elected officials who represent New Hampshire in Congress.”

Thank you, New Hampshire. I thank many others whose efforts today, up to 10 States, I cannot specifically acknowledge in the time allotted to me.

I bring you deep gratitude from the residents of the District of Columbia who have only my voice, no voice in the Senate, only my voice, and whose voice, of their own, you will see in the Internet but who do not have ways to reach you, which is why I am here this evening.

I must thank, in particular, the legal scholars who have come forward. In searching for legal comment, we found many willing to come forward, and from constitutional scholars of various views, there were any number who were particularly helpful in expressing and answering the hard questions that have been raised, hard questions, not because most Americans would consider them such, but if you happen to be a constitutional lawyer, and I, myself, practice constitutional law, these questions become closer questions than if you are an American who does not have to take the Constitution into effect in forming your own view.

I particularly thank Kenneth Starr, former judge Kenneth Starr; former judge, Patricia Wald. Kenneth Starr is a Republican. Patricia Wald is a Democrat. Both have testified for the bill.

I thank Professor Viet Dinh who has come forward in a quite extraordinary way. He is the point man on constitutional issues, or was, when Mr. Ashcroft was the attorney general. He

has been, perhaps, the foremost conservative scholar to come forward for the bill.

I particularly thank Walter Smith, a former corporation counsel, or attorney general, as it is now called. Richard Bress of Latham & Watkins, Walter Smith of D.C. Applesseed, these are different scholars who are from different parts of the constitutional spectrum who have come forward to be helpful.

But you I think that I ought to cite conservative scholars. Frankly, those are the scholars on whom we have chiefly relied because we believe that if we relied chiefly on Judge Wald or Walter Smith or many others who have helped us, then we would have greater difficulty in showing that this bill is eminently constitutional.

Remember, it's the constitutional issue to which the opponents have been pushed back. They can't make an argument that sounds in American terms that the average person could understand. So they go into the Constitution.

That, my friend, is defamation to the framers, because what they are saying, hey, the framers did it to you. We don't have anything to do with it.

Of course, if the Framers did it to us, then we must pass the bill and let the only part of our Government that is empowered to tell us that do so, and that's the Supreme Court.

But, no, they sit back and fancy themselves constitutional scholars for the purpose of saying that 600,000 residents who pay taxes like they do, have served in the country's wars, should not have the same rights they do. This in the 21st century, no less.

Professor Viet Dinh, who served as a scholar, who served in the Bush Justice Department under former Attorney General Ashcroft, and, therefore, advised the whole Justice Department, he was the man who advised them on constitutional matters, testified there are no indications, textual or otherwise, to suggest that the Framers intended that congressional authority, under the District clause, that's the District of Columbia clause, extraordinary and plenary power in all other respects, would not extend to grant District residents representation in Congress.

You see, we are left with either the Framers intended to have the people who lived in the Nation's Capital they just set up without the same rights as everybody else, or they intended somebody to be able to give it. Now, if they intended us not to have the same rights then we, of course, have to amend the Constitution.

But I would suggest that unless you can cite evidence of somebody getting up and saying that, that you have got to find a better reason.

□ 2015

To hide behind the Framers is an act close to cowardice. If you think we shouldn't have it, you should say why. Take the responsibility, but do not say that the Framers of the Constitution

from Maryland and the Framers of the Constitution from Virginia meant to disenfranchise their own residents. Do not say that the Framers of the Constitution meant once you crossed the District line, you would lose the rights you had on the other side in every other State of the Union.

The opponents rest on one word, and that is the Constitution says that the vote in the House should go to Members of States. They say ah-hah, the District is not a State; ergo, no vote for you people.

Well, the fact is that since the passage of the Constitution, this government, this Congress, has defined the District as a State in over 500 provisions of United States Code. The only way in which we are not defined as a State respects our voting rights, and that brings me to the floor today.

Cite chapter and verse to prove that, and I shall. And what I am citing is not only the language of the Constitution, I am citing the Supreme Court of the United States who interprets the Constitution. The Supreme Court has approved action by this Congress equating the District of Columbia with the States for constitutional purposes. Here is the language from the Constitution that the Supreme Court over the years says includes the District of Columbia although the word “State” is used.

“Commerce among the States” taken to court, the District is not a State and shouldn't be included in the commerce clause. Answer from the Supreme Court: For these purposes, the Nation's Capital is included when the word “State” is used.

Suits between citizens of different States, means something special for the District of Columbia, it was alleged, not a State, took it to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court says citizens of different States of course includes the Nation's Capital. They said this is not what we meant, we only meant that the District of Columbia would not be a part of a State. We set up something that for lack of a better word we called a District of Columbia.

What, is the Commonwealth of Virginia not a State? Are they not a State because they are called a Commonwealth? Is the Commonwealth of Massachusetts not a State? How in the world can one hinge a right so precious in this democracy on the use of the word “State” when it has been interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States in decade after decade to include the District of Columbia?

I must cite on this April 15, Tax Day, my very favorite. If indeed States means or does not mean the District of Columbia, the people I represent want every dime we have paid to the Federal Treasury back because the 16th amendment says there shall be direct taxes by the Federal Government. Direct taxes only on citizens of the States; if we are not a State, you owe us a lot of money. It is almost silly to even try to argue from so slim a use of language.

When one reads the Federalist Papers, if one reads American history, if one reads decade after decade where the matter of State has been challenged when someone was trying to pay less taxes or trying to get out of the commerce clause, and in a dozen other ways I could name and the Supreme Court has simply pushed them back, I don't think you would be quick to continue to make that argument.

I want to especially thank the Blue Dogs again for their generosity in giving me their hour. I want to thank all of those on both sides of the aisle who have rallied after more than two centuries finally to this idea.

I want to leave you with a picture in your mind, this young woman, Chandrai Jackson-Saunders who pays her Federal income taxes and teaches our children and doesn't have the vote.

I am moved to tears and to laughter by a series of cartoons making fun of our country for not giving the residents of the District of Columbia a vote. Here is one that happened to be in the Washington Post. It says "Import Democracy" on a raised placard, then in small print at the bottom it says "No Invasion Necessary." No, all that is necessary is that we face up to 200 years of obligation.

For me, I confess that this matter is deeply personal. I am the third generation of Holmes family to live here. My great grandfather, Richard Holmes, was really born in Virginia as a slave. One day he left the plantation. He just walked away; nobody must have been looking. In my family no one says that he gathered together in some kind of heroic way—he left the plantation—and got as far as here and started our family.

My father was born and raised in District public schools, just like my grandfather. My grandfather entered the D.C. Fire Department in 1902. We have long been without our rights here. So for me it is first and foremost a matter for the people I represent.

But in the interest of revealing all that is concerned, hiding nothing, it is hard for me to say that there is not a personal matter associated here, particularly when I see it is in the Senate that the bill is now awaiting 60 votes, although it already has 57 percent of the Senate, because what I remember as a child growing up without a mayor, without a city council, there was no representation whatsoever here. The place was ruled by the Congress. The President appointed three commissioners; no democracy of any kind. And it was a segregated city. Oh, how segregated. The schools were not integrated until *Brown v. Board of Education*.

When I was at Dunbar High School and had mostly finished high school, the District was one of six *Brown v. Board of Education* cases. So the notion of filibuster rings far too personal to me. I remember the filibusters of the Senate, my friends, as a child. In the Senate, the N-word was routinely used.

This place was entirely controlled by southern Democrats who controlled every subcommittee and every committee because racial rhetoric and racial prejudice were used to get them back to the House each and every year.

It gives me great grief and sadness to see that Republicans have not been in the forefront of this bill except for those who have stepped forward and unabashedly embraced the bill and Republican traditions because it was after the Civil War that the District first got a delegate and home rule. It was the Republican Congress that first gave us democracy. It was the so-called radical Republicans who in the Nation's Capital exercised their right and their obligation to see that democracy came here. It was the end of Reconstruction and the Tildon-Hayes compromise with the withdrawal of Federal troops from the South and the resurrection of Democrats that overturned home rule for the District of Columbia and sent a delegate who had only a term or two back to where he came from. It was Republicans who were in the leadership then. In the name of the great leaders who gave birth to their party, you would expect them to be in the leadership now.

The interesting thing is that this is a now-majority African American city, but that is a recent vintage. The segregated city I grew up in was a majority white city. It didn't become majority black until close to 1960. Black people in the minority took a lot of white people down with them because the fact is that race played a central role in the denial of voting rights and home rule to the District of Columbia. Today it is partisanship. But it was unabashedly race. Even though blacks were a minority, there were enough blacks here so that southern Democrats wanted to be sure there was no home rule and no representation, even a delegate. They were not bashful about it.

To quote one Alabama Democratic Senator, "The Negroes flocked in, and there was only one way out, and that was to deny suffrage and power to every human being in the District," that means regardless of race, creed or color.

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I don't want to hide from whence cometh what gave birth to the issue here.

Senator Ed Brooke, a native Washingtonian, became the first popularly elected Black Senator, born and raised in the District of Columbia, went to the same high school I did. But he had to go outside the District of Columbia to get any vote at all, and certainly a vote in the Senate.

So there's a very sorry racial history behind it all. The last thing Republicans want to do is to attach their partisanship to that history because they're not a part of that history. That history was led by Democrats, and mostly southern Democrats.

Now, the Democratic Party, to its great credit, has taken that off of

itself, scrubbed that terrible stain, that racial stain off. To their great credit, the Republicans joined us when we reauthorized the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

There is no difference, no difference whatsoever here. There's no difference when you are talking about the District of Columbia which, in the Vietnam war, lost more men than did 10 States; in World War II, lost more men than did four States; World War I, lost more men than did three States, and the Korean War, lost more than did eight States. We have fought, died, bled for the country we love.

The notion that there would be a Member who'd have to come to the floor to ask for such a right in 2008 should be unthinkable.

I particularly, tonight, dedicate these remarks not only to those who paid their taxes today, but to those who've given their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan and most recently, Darryl Dent, the D.C. National Guard, Specialist Darryl Dent, Army Reservist Lieutenant Colonel Paul Kimbrough, Marine Lance Corporal Gregory MacDonald, Marine Lieutenant Colonel Kevin M. Shea, among thousands over the years that we have sent to war, proudly so.

I dedicate these remarks to Wesley Brown, the first black graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy is still living. There have been at least 20 Blacks who had gone to the Naval Academy. They had to be what we called super Black. They were driven out by the most horrendous racial harassment. The story of sacrifices made—what's my time?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. TSONGAS). Ten seconds.

Ms. NORTON. The story of sacrifices made is not a story I should need to tell. All I should need to say is what I leave you with this evening, with my gratitude for your support and friendship.

I am an American. I represent 600,000 Americans. Please do all you can to see to it that we are treated as you would want to be treated, like other Americans.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, today is Tax Day and it is the day that D.C. residents pay their Federal income taxes. Yet D.C. residents remain without a vote. D.C. residents enjoy many of the benefits of U.S. citizenship but they lack the vote.

The rest of the Nation votes as District residents pay their taxes and serve in wars abroad in Iraq and Afghanistan. Andy Shallal, a D.C. citizen said it best, "People like me of Iraqi ancestry and even my son, who was born in the United States, are entitled to vote in the Iraqi election due in large part to the service of the citizens of the District of Columbia and other Americans who have fought and died in Iraq." In spite of D.C. residents' service in foreign wars and even in the American Revolution, and every war since where U.S. was involved, D.C. residents cannot vote in their own country.

Tax Day is a bitter reminder to the Nation that the founders of our country who staged their revolution for representation would then deny representation to residents of their very

own capital city. Professor Viet Dinh, President Bush's former assistant attorney general for constitutional matters, has wiped away the major argument that because the District is not a state, its American citizens cannot vote in the House by detailing the many ways in which "since 1805 the Supreme Court has recognized that Congress has the authority to treat the District as a state and Congress has repeatedly exercised this authority." My favorite is the 16th amendment which requires only that citizens of states pay Federal income taxes. Why then have District residents continuously been taxed without representation?

There is a terrible racial stain that has been at the core of the denial of the rights of D.C. citizens. Congress required the same racial segregation in schools and public accommodations in D.C. and other parts of the South until the 1954 Brown decision. As one southern Senator put it, "The Negroes . . . flocked in . . . and there was only one way out . . . and that was to deny . . . suffrage entirely to every human being in the District."

Former Republican Senator Edward Brooke, a native Washingtonian and the Nation's first popularly elected black Senator wrote, "The experience of living in a segregated city and of serving in our segregated armed forces perhaps explains why my party's work on the Voting Rights Act reauthorization last year and on the pending D.C. House Voting Rights Act has been so important to me personally. The irony of course, is that I had to leave my hometown to get representation in Congress and to become a Member."

Today, on Tax Day, we need to move to abolish the irony and the tragedy of the many who have come to the Nation's capital seeking freedom for well over 200 years. It is on this day, that D.C. residents pay their Federal income taxes without a vote.

Presently, only three votes are needed for Senate passage of the D.C. Voting Rights Bill. I am a supporter of the bill in the House. I appeal to your conscience and ask for your vote so that finally there will be a vote for your fellow Americans here, who have paid for this precious right many times over in blood and tears. Support the voting rights bill today.

COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, thank you very much. It is true that today is the day that the American people have their obligation to pay taxes for the American government to continue to function. And obviously, there are many good things that the Federal Government does, and there are many not so good things that the Federal Government does.

But one of the things that I think is very important for us to focus attention on, especially as we deal with a challenging economy, is the need for us to ensure that, as stewards of those taxpayer dollars, those dollars fund this institution, the greatest deliberative body known to man, and we need

to ensure that we put into place policies that will encourage strong, dynamic, economic growth and to make sure that there are opportunities for every single American. And Madam Speaker, we're going to talk about that this evening.

I have to say that my original intentions for this special order were a little different than they are going to end up being tonight. I'd planned to join tonight with several of my colleagues who have spent time in Colombia. I'd planned to talk about what I've personally witnessed there, and I'd invited many of my colleagues to do the same.

I'd hoped to make this a bipartisan endeavor, and I extended invitations to several of my Democratic colleagues to participate this evening. And I will say that I still do hope that we might have a chance to do that. And one of our Democratic colleagues did come up to me and say that he had hoped to participate.

I thought that this was very important, because I knew that when the President sent, a week ago today, when he sent the implementing legislation for the U.S./Colombia Free Trade Agreement, a 60-day clock, under trade promotion authority, would begin. We would have 60 legislative days to hold a vote on the agreement. This meant that the House of Representatives would face a vote on the U.S./Colombia Free Trade Agreement some time in probably late July. That would leave us 3 months for debate, discussion, education, and enlightenment about what this agreement would mean to the American people.

However, despite the ample time granted under trade promotion authority, I knew that many of my colleagues, particularly my Democratic colleagues, remained deeply ambivalent on the trade agreement itself. We certainly saw that as we had this debate last week.

For this reason, it was my hope that this special order this evening would be opening the 3-month discussion in a bipartisan way, and what I wanted to do was I wanted to shift the focus away from the free trade agreement, and I'd hoped that a group of Republicans and Democrats who've gone to Colombia could come together here on the House floor to simply share our experiences and describe what we've seen in Colombia, over the past year, or at least a half a year.

I knew that much of the free trade agreement debate would hinge on the current situation, as it exists in Colombia, what progress has been made, what steps has the Colombian government taken.

I wanted this debate to stay grounded in facts and a full understanding of the Colombia, of 2008, not a caricature of the Colombia past. I'd thought that bipartisan, firsthand testimony would further that goal of allowing the American people and our colleagues to understand the changes that have taken place in Colombia.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, the landscape here in the House was drastically altered last week when my California colleague, Speaker PELOSI, took the unprecedented step, never before had this been done, but it was a step of changing the Rules of the House in order to block a vote on the free trade agreement.

In one fell swoop, she ended 3 months, what would be the beginning, and tonight would have been part of that, of substantive, bipartisan deliberation before it even had the chance to begin. Apparently, she didn't like her odds in what would clearly have been a fair fight, so she changed the rules in the middle of the game.

The condemnation from around the country came swiftly. Now, I have control of the floor now for an hour, and I could easily fill the entire 1 hour simply by reading the scathing editorials that have come about over the past week reproaching the Democratic leadership for their petulant act. The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, the Washington Post, hardly mouthpieces for Republicans or President Bush. And even Speaker PELOSI's hometown newspaper, the San Francisco Chronicle. All, Madam Speaker, have had the harshest of words for the dangerous and unprecedented action that was taken here last week.

Now, I'll read just a few of those highlights. I mentioned Speaker PELOSI's hometown newspaper, the San Francisco Chronicle, a paper that I actually enjoy reading myself, but again, far from being a Republican mouthpiece. They accuse Speaker PELOSI of "pandering" and "playing politics."

It points out that the decision to block a vote on the agreement is especially egregious, considering that she represents a region that heavily depends on exports for its economic competitiveness and job creation, particularly through its ports.

My hometown paper, the Los Angeles Times, stated it very plainly, and I quote. "Halting the vote wasn't about the U.S. economy and wasn't about Colombia. It was about politics." That's what the Los Angeles Times, again, hardly a Republican mouthpiece, had to say.

It points out that the FTA creates quite a bind for the Democratic leadership because what is good for their party is bad for the United States of America.

It highlights the current imbalance in our trade relationship. We have an open market, yet face barriers in Colombia.

I'll say that again. And Los Angeles Times pointed that out, Madam Speaker. We allow the rest of the world, including Colombia now, under the ATPA, the Andean Trade Preference Agreement, we allow them access to the U.S. consumer market. All this agreement that we had hoped to be debating now, but the clock has stopped on that. All this agreement would do was level that playing field and allow